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The Thousand Ship Navy: *Creating a Maritime System of Systems*

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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Abstract

This paper proposes an alternate method in which the Thousand Ship Navy (TSN), or Global Maritime Partnership Initiative (GMPI), could be realized in an operational sense. Very little published work exists other than opinion pieces and broad stroke descriptions of the current model being discussed. The thesis proposes that the voluntary member, ad-hoc participation model will be insufficient; to see this concept to fruition will require more formal agreements, true, near real-time, and equal information sharing existing within a network of similarly focused coalitions. It examines the tsunami relief efforts in Indonesia, the security efforts against piracy in the Strait of Malacca, and the Proliferation Security Initiative as brief case studies. While each had its own merits, a compilation of the best of each, taken along with other existing programs and organizations, was put in the context of a system of systems. Additionally, it addresses the many foreign interests who fear American control over maritime security for its own interest, stating that the other global partners must be brought into the network as leaders, not just members. Many proponents argue that the loosely organized model is put forth to counter the resistance seen to programs like PSI; that fact in and of itself is shown to be its downfall.

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*"A good Navy is not a provocation to war. It is the surest guaranty of peace."*¹

President Theodore Roosevelt recognized what many contemporary thinkers and strategists believed, and what is now recognized doctrine. On a broader scale, peace and security are gained by providing plausible deterrents, whether they are military, economic, or political. In a global environment largely dependent upon maritime commerce, security of the world's oceans is vital to economic survival. As airline security has increased dramatically since the rise in terrorist threats via that medium in the past few decades, the world's oceans have offered a relatively safe and inconspicuous mode of transport. Piracy, once believed to be a threat of a past era, has resurfaced and has actually emerged as one of the primary security concerns of the maritime community. It is widely accepted that transnational terrorists and criminals both use the world's oceans as a means to transport material and personnel.

It's an innocuous shipping container, no different than thousands of others moving every day across the globe. Traveling on a Taiwanese container ship across the Pacific, the box — designed as part of a global, commercial intermodal system and transported on ships, railroad cars and 18-wheel trucks — carries documentation saying it's filled with medical supplies from Indonesia. It might be loaded and unloaded onto several ships before it winds up on a dock in Baltimore, where an inspector looks over the documentation and sees nothing suspicious. The container becomes the load for a truck bound for Cincinnati, where it's delivered to a supply company that's a front for a terrorist organization.

*In Ohio, a laboratory-grown sample of the smallpox virus is removed from the legitimate medical samples in the shipping container. The terrorists infect themselves and fan out across the U.S., traveling on airliners and walking around shopping malls, movie theaters and grocery stores, infecting thousands of people with a potentially fatal virus that won't be detectable for nearly two weeks.*²

¹ President Theodore Roosevelt, 02 Dec 1902, second annual message to Congress.

² Cavas, Christopher P.. "The Thousand-Ship Navy." Armed Forces Journal Dec 2006(Dec 2006) 15 Mar 2007 <<http://www.armedforcesjournal.com/2006/12/2336959>>.

Christopher Cavas provides the above scenario as a prelude to a discussion of the Chief of Naval Operations' Thousand Ship Navy (TSN) theory being touted within the beltway and around the globe. The concept, defined by Admiral Mullen as "a global maritime partnership that unites maritime forces, port operators, commercial shippers, and international, governmental and nongovernmental agencies to address mutual concerns," is a proposed mechanism to police the world's oceans, shipping routes, and sea ports to prevent the transport of illicit materials and personnel, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and maritime criminal activities such as piracy. This concept, likely inspired by the success of operations like the tsunami relief effort in Indonesia in late 2004 and early 2005, would, in its purest form, prevent scenarios like that described by Mr. Cavas above from occurring.

I believe however that the Thousand Ship Navy concept proposed by Admiral Mullen will ultimately fail without formal commitments of participation, closely and formally linked regional organizations, and information sharing agreements by participating nations and organizations. I will begin by outlining how the coordinated efforts now put forth by this proposal would achieve its goals, discussing foreign perceptions of the concept, and later, briefly describing how the idea may have grown from the 2005 tsunami relief efforts. I will then discuss the relevance of information sharing (and how it differs from intelligence) and a similar program, the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) that, some may argue, has yet to prove its utility, then propose a counter-argument to my thesis. I will finish by providing some conclusions and a possible way ahead to create an operational doctrine from this fledgling theory.

The Thousand Ship Navy, or the Global Maritime Partnership Initiative (GMPI) as some call it,³ can not achieve its aims without the participation of organizations that control the shipping systems, ships, and the ports they sail in and out of, on an international scale. Security of the seas involves much more than just the ocean transit routes these ships sail on. Dr. Milan Vego, in his recent work titled *On Operational Warfare*, identifies this succinctly. "One's maritime trade is made secure by organizing the defense and protection of not only commercial shipping at sea but also all other elements of trade..."⁴ He emphasizes the crucial aspect that Admiral Mullen recently identified regarding inclusion of commercial entities: "I have been talking frequently about the need to bring together an international 1,000-ship Navy, not just grey hulls flying the U.S. flag, but a network of international navies, coast guards, maritime forces, port operators, commercial shippers and local law enforcement -- all working together."⁵

Background

While much has been written on this new concept, it has been a challenge for the great maritime powers of history to maintain maritime security and one that will not easily be put into practice in the future. Freedom of the seas is the foundation upon which maritime commerce rests. Controlling sea lines of communication, whether for commercial or military purposes, is critical for maritime and land-locked nations. Whether a nation is defending its shipping against piracy, preventing the illegal use of its seas, or providing for the safe transit

³ Cavas, Christopher P.. "SPANNING THE GLOBE ." [DefenseNews.com](http://www.defensenews.com) 06 Jan 2007 30 Mar 2007 <<http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?F=2455890&C=navwar>>. Also, GMPI is the formal name given to the concept by administration and OSD officials.

⁴ Dr. Milan Vego, *On Operational Warfare*, Naval War College: Newport, RI 2006, p109.

⁵ Mullen, Michael ADM, Speech at the World Affairs Council, Pittsburgh, Pa., 19 May 2006

of commercial mariners, a maritime force, a nation's coast guard, its navy, or a non-military security organization, has always been the preferred tool. Control of the seas can thus be linked to a nation's security. As President John F. Kennedy said shortly after the Cuban missile crisis, "...events of October 1962 indicated, as they had all through history, that control of the sea means security. Control of the seas can mean peace. Control of the seas can mean victory. The United States must control the seas if it is to protect your security...."⁶

The TSN proposal directly supports and provides a pillar for the development of the U.S. Navy's new maritime strategy. It aims to accomplish some key elements from the National Security Strategy, namely to "strengthen alliances to defeat global terrorism and work to prevent attacks against us and our friends, ignite a new era of global economic growth through free markets and free trade, and engage the opportunities and confront the challenges of globalization."⁷ Global maritime security not only serves our national strategic interests, but aligns with those of many other nations and organizations throughout the world. In the continuing development of the thousand-ship navy concept, some ground breaking alliances are being fostered, including those with nations like China, Russia, and India. Although the tenets of the proposal are not based upon colonial or expansionist themes, some fears reside within the governments and militaries of these prospective participants and must be assuaged.

Foreign participation is fundamental to the success of the global maritime network, whether it is through military force providers, commercial and financial input, or information sharing. Chinese analysts, in recent statements, noted their fears that the U.S. is trying to

⁶ Kennedy, John F., speech on board USS KITTY HAWK, 06 Jun 1963. *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: John F. Kennedy, Containing the Public Messages, Speeches, and Statements of the President, January 1 to November 22, 1963*. (Washington, DC: US GPO, 1964): 445.

⁷ Bush, George W.. United States. White House. National Security Strategy of the United States of America. Washington, DC: GPO, 2006.

create an American led-force in their attempt to control maritime commerce around the globe. Li Jie, a Chinese military analyst, noted during a program on Chinese television that “...the TSN concept is...aimed to ally as many navies as possible in order to serve U.S.’ own strategic objectives.” Li Jie went further and claimed that “The U.S. claimed that the TSN aims to safeguard world peace and to fight terrorism, but it has ulterior motives...and its ultimate goal is to become the sole global power in order to control the oil resources in the Middle East.” Mr. Jie also made references to shipbuilding shortfalls in the discussion.⁸ While these foreign concerns may be understandable, it would be crucial for U.S. officials to assuage those fears in order to garner their support. Many nations have agreed in principle to the concept, including a critical ally in Southeast Asia, India. After a recent visit there, ADM Mullen presented the TSN concept to senior military and diplomatic leaders, and by all reports, it was received well. As one analyst noted, “However, if TSN [the Thousand Ship Navy] is fostered as an international maritime cooperation agreement, India will veer around to be an active participant in the program. So the USA needs to package it in a manner as to appeal not just to the navies, but also to governments and the lay public.”⁹

Analysis

What is the threat to maritime security and how would a global network counter this?

Recent statistics show that eighty percent of the global economy travels via the sea.¹⁰

⁸ Open Source Center, report and translation of the 06 Jan 2007 broadcast of CCTV-7 *Defense Review Week*, a Chinese panel discussion program on national defense issues.

⁹ Raghuvanshi, Vivek. *India Intrigued by 1,000-Ship Navy Idea*. DefenseNews.com, 06 Jan 2007. Quote of Rahul Bhonsle, a defense analyst and retired Indian Army brigadier, <http://www.defensenews.com>

¹⁰ United States. Department of Homeland Security. Maritime Commerce Security Plan for the National Strategy for Maritime Security. Washington, DC: GPO, 2005.

An infrastructure so critical to the economic survival of nations is an enticing target for criminals and terrorists. Drugs, human trafficking, weapons, and piracy are just a few of the threats that must be countered, and prevented from operating in the maritime domain. In order to accomplish this, every participant, from the port authority who receives and transships cargo, to the security forces and coast guards in port and littoral areas, to blue water navies operating outside territorial waters, must be cognizant of the environment to identify, interdict, and deter these threats. It demands knowledge based information being shared with all agencies and entities involved in maritime operations.

While capabilities vary between organizations and nations, all entities have the capability to share information, and to differing extents, to act upon it. It is crucial at this point to understand the difference between information and intelligence. Intelligence, as defined in JP 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, is the product resulting from the collection, processing, integration, analysis, evaluation, and interpretation of available information concerning foreign countries or areas pertains to data gathered from secure sources, usually proprietary and classified at national levels. Information is just that, unclassified data that could and should be shared, usually not proprietary either in source or nature. While many nations are privy to U.S. intelligence, at most levels, many more are not. There could be many instances where data required to intercept or prevent illicit actions would be gained from intelligence; nations not signatory to intelligence sharing agreements with the U.S. would be unable to have access to the data and thus would be unable to act upon it.

Three brief case studies demonstrate either the success or failure of constructs similar to TSN. First, a brief discussion of the large scale relief efforts for the 2004 Indonesian tsunami (UNIFIED ASSISTANCE) that came from around the globe will show how the TSN concept can work. Then, a description of recent advances against piracy in the Strait of Malacca, a more formal construct that has seen great success, but on a much smaller scale will show

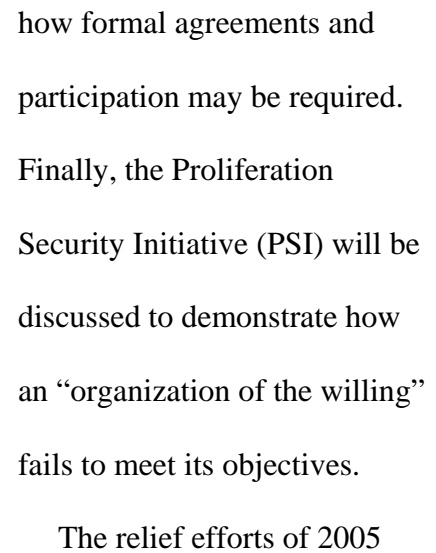


Figure 1 after the devastating tsunami are often referred to by ADM Mullen as the beginnings of the TSN concept. Global relief organizations and numerous nations provided military forces in a humanitarian role to rescue survivors, stem the occurrence of famine and disease, and begin a long rebuilding process for those affected. Figure 1 above shows the various nations that participated in the operational theater.¹¹

While many proponents of this operation cite its numerous successes, there were many difficulties in organizing the effort. A number of the nations operated independently, while others simply joined with the U.S. to gain visibility on maritime and air domain awareness.

¹¹ "Operation: Unified Assistance Tsunami Relief Effort Online Archive." U.S. Pacific Command. 15 Apr 2005. U.S. Pacific Command. 22 Apr 2007 <<http://www.pacom.mil/special/0412asia/index.shtml>>.

Often, governmental and non-governmental organizations operated completely outside of the visibility of the Combined Support Force (CSF) commander. The U.S. military functions well within a defined operating environment; this was exactly the opposite. Operations across a vast area of operations required coordination; this was compounded by the fact that at one point there were 22 nations and a myriad of other organizations involved. The resultant avenue for success was a system of systems method. A virtual civil-military operations center (CMOC) was constructed to allow any of the militaries or other organizations to work through requests for assistance, airlifts, and supplies. It was termed OPERATION UNIFIED ASSISTANCE, with the byline “A Team of Teams,” defining its true nature. Each group involved had its own agenda and worked under its own operating guidelines. What PACOM did for the effort was create a clearinghouse of information, allowing the various entities to gain situational awareness and share information with each other. This operation most nearly mirrors the aims of TSN; ADM Mullen often cites it as a model. But, the successes observed here appear to result from a common objective of providing humanitarian assistance, not success of the conglomerate.

As recently as 2003, piracy in the Strait of Malacca was prevalent. Most attacks occurred in Indonesian ports and in the strait, with 120 reported in 1999. Local nations Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia had independently attempted to combat this growing threat in order to increase security of the world's second-most traveled maritime choke points (the Dover Strait being the busiest). Figure 2 shows that while efforts have succeeded recently, there are still an alarming number of piracy incidents worldwide, in the last 5 months alone.¹² But, in

OCEAN	Atlantic	Indian	Pacific	2005 those three nations signed a tri-lateral
April 25-May 1, 2007	2	5	0	agreement to conduct coordinated, joint air
April 18-24, 2007	0	5	0	patrols, dubbed "Eyes in the Sky" and joint
April 11-17, 2007	0	6	0	maritime patrols to curb the attacks. Data
April 4-10, 2007	1	5	0	reported by the International Maritime
March 28-April 3, 2007	2	2	0	Bureau (IMB) center in Kuala Lumpur Asia
March 21-27, 2007	0	2	0	2007. The key to this effort, the first quarter
March 14-20, 2007	0	4	0	national information sharing agreement
March 7-13, 2007	1	1	0	between fourteen Southeast Asia nations
February 28-March 6, 2007	1	3	0	called Regional Cooperation Agreement on
February 21-27	1	2	0	Combating Piracy (ReCAP), headquartered in
February 14-20, 2007	0	2	0	Singapore, was recently lauded by ADM
February 7-13, 2007	2	1	0	Keating, PACOM commander, saying "It is a
January 31-February 6, 2007	1	2	0	
January 24-30, 2007	1	4	1	
January 17-23, 2007	0	3	0	
January 9-16, 2007	2	0	0	
January 2-8, 2007	0	0	0	
December 20-25, 2006	1	3	2	
December 13-19, 2006	3	0	0	
December 6-12, 2006	1	5	1	
November 29-December 5, 2006	1	3	0	
November 21-28, 2006	0	4	0	

Figure 2 situation that is much different and much improved just in the past five years,"

¹² Piracy Reports, Vigilo Risk website, http://www.vigilorisk.com/piracy_reports.php

at a recent joint press conference with Malaysia and USPACOM.¹³ These coordinated efforts, all conducted under the auspices of formal, regional agreements, clearly demonstrate how TSN could succeed, albeit under a much different approach.

In May of 2003, President Bush announced the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). Intended as a robust and global effort to stem the flow of WMD from nations like North Korea and loosely founded in a 1992 United Nations determination that WMD proliferation was detrimental to world peace, participation has been limited and its successes are few. Some key nations, such as China and India, have declined to participate due to concerns over its legality, specifically with respect to maritime law as described in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Currently, 15 nations are full signatories to the treaty, while some sixty others participate on an ad-hoc basis with no formal agreements or requirements, similar to the proffered construct of TSN. This program is not endorsed by the U.N., nor are there any consequences for not participating. At best, it has served as a vehicle for pressuring nations such as North Korea, Iran, and Syria, a basis for a few bi-lateral ship boarding agreements, and as the premise for a few limited maritime exercises loosely constructed around WMD proliferation scenarios.¹⁴ It has failed at evolving into the global partnership originally envisioned by its founder, John Bolton.

Counter-Argument

In Admiral Mullen's description of who may participate and what level of commitment they could provide, he states, "Membership in this 'navy' is purely voluntary and would have

¹³ "Improved security cuts piracy attacks in Malacca Strait ." ABC Radio Australia. 16 Apr 2007. 24 Apr 2007 <<http://www.radioaustralia.net.au/news/stories/s1898732.htm>>.

¹⁴ Khurana, Gurpreet S . "Thousand-Ship Navy: A Reincarnation of the Controversial P.S.I.?" IDSA Strategic Comments 28 Dec 2006 26 Mar 2007 <<http://www.idsa.in/index.htm>>.

no legal or encumbering ties. It would be a free-form, self-organizing network of maritime partners - good neighbors interested in using the power of the sea to unite, rather than to divide. The barriers for entry are low. Respect for sovereignty is high."¹⁵ This approach may parlay the critics who fear U.S. hegemony over the seas, and leaves the level of commitment open to interpretation to any who may choose to participate. Some may argue that it also provides a sound argument for those who so vehemently opposed joining PSI – the concern that other navies may be allowed to freely violate a nation’s sovereignty, whether through territorial sea violation or by boarding another nation’s flagged vessel. PSI offers a critical example of what has not worked, and why I believe Admiral Mullen has created the TSN concept free of a multi-lateral formal commitment. It provides the opportunity for nations and organizations, commercial or governmental, to join and participate at will. The conundrum that arises is an uncertainty in knowing what capabilities are available at any given time, and the level of information sharing required, to counter a threat.

Conclusions

The maritime domain is too big – thousands of ships travel the millions of square miles of the world’s oceans everyday. No single navy is capable of policing or monitoring this great expanse alone. As ADM Mullen pointed out in September 2005 when he introduced the Thousand Ship Navy concept, “I am convinced that nobody – no nation today – can go it alone, especially in the maritime domain.”¹⁶ As many nations around the world face budgetary constraints and the global market continues to expand, criminals and terrorists are

¹⁵Mullen, ADM Michael. Thousand Ship Navy." Honolulu Advertiser 29 Oct 2006: Opinions.

¹⁶ Mullen, Michael ADM. 17th International Seapower Symposium, Naval War College, Newport, RI. September 2005. Quoted in opinion piece by MGEN Gordon C Nash (OPNAV N85), *Seabasing: an international aspect*, Jane’s Defence Weekly, 29 March 2006.

leaping to take advantage of the paucity of maritime enforcement forces. The U.S. shipbuilding industry is failing to meet the proposed 313 ship navy, and continues to fall technologically behind many other nations. We can not go it alone, but TSN, as a loosely constructed, voluntary network, is not good enough.

The examples provided above have shown formal agreements that are specifically focused (PSI) don't work. Loose coalitions may provide a unity of effort, but self-interest too often prevails and too many restrictions and independent operations prevent a global focus (UNIFIED ASSISTANCE), since there become too many random efforts across too large a spectrum. More formal agreements, with interlaced capabilities and means, and unified goals and objectives, can achieve a true unity of effort in striving towards the desired end state (Strait of Malacca piracy).

For the GMPI / TSN construct to materialize on an operational scale, it will require much more than what was put into UNIFIED ASSISTANCE. This was a crisis, with the requisite sense of urgency by all players, with people's lives and homes hanging in the balance. Humanitarian assistance is one thing; achieving global maritime domain awareness in order to fighting terrorism, piracy, and crime is yet another. The study above of the Malaysia – Singapore – Indonesia consortium provides a much better foundation from which to develop TSN into a doctrinal template from which to operate.

Fears among many foreign nations have been identified and to gain their cooperation, a partnership, not driven by the United States must be formed. Put forth as a multinational organization partnered not just with militaries, but commercial and non-governmental groups, it will likely be viewed in a much friendlier light. Our Combatant Commands must press forward and continue to leverage their Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) efforts and

renew, develop, and nurture maritime relationships around the globe. While PSI may have had good intentions behind it, the fact that it was U.S. led and teetered on the edge of violating recognized maritime law, is dooming it to failure.

One critical keystone of this concept is information and intelligence sharing. As our nation's Maritime Security Policy directs, "It is critical that the U.S. develop an enhanced capability to identify threats to the Maritime Domain as early and as distant from our shores as possible..."¹⁷ In order to achieve awareness at the level required to "...identify threats as early and distant..." and gain global awareness, the U.S. must include as many other organizations and nations as possible. Information is vital and holds the key to success however in some cases what is considered intelligence data is required to develop a case that justifies interdiction or capture of a suspected threat. Current policies within the U.S. intelligence community, NATO, the UN, and amongst nations prevent the sharing of critical information in a timely manner, if at all. Again, if we refer to the Strait of Malacca case, we see that when information sharing occurs within common interests, a greater chance of achieving a favorable outcome results, with a true unity of effort.

Recommendations

In order to integrate the issues above to create formal commitments of participation, closely and formally linked regional organizations, and information sharing agreements by participating nations and organizations, we need to approach the problem from several angles. First, the combatant commands must modify their Theater Security Cooperation Plans (TSCP) to focus on developing regional security coalitions, being cautious to prevent

¹⁷ Bush, George W.. United States. White House.NSPD-41/HSPD-13, Maritime Security Policy. Washington, DC: GPO, 2004.

the sense that they are not regionally owned. Second, our current programs for sharing and releasing information, whether sensitive in nature or identified as intelligence, must be changed to function closely with regional coalition assets. Next, continue engagement with organizations like NATO, the European Union, INTERPOL and companies like Maersk to create formal commitments of support and participation. Finally, mature the TSN / GMPI concept into a functional system of systems regionally and globally linked.

Current TSCPs generally focus on growing diplomatic and military relationships through funding venues, exercises, and port visits. These must redirect towards growing the regional coalitions, like the Malaysia – Indonesia – Singapore group, that take responsibility and ownership of their own maritime zones. While this is similarly addressed in the current concept, it has been focused as a “police yourself” policy, not as a “pride in ownership” approach. By enabling nations (like the U.S. already does with their Foreign Military Funding and Foreign Military Sales programs) and sharing our data that may not be readily accessible to them, they can take action collectively, or with security assistance provided by another nation, to enforce their own maritime security. By including existing organizations and commercial concerns (shipping companies, port authorities) in this coalition, they will gain increased awareness over the maritime domain by including all players on an equal footing. For example, the current Southeast Asia group members are also members of the ReCAP mentioned earlier. If you were to include India and especially China, and leverage their interests to enable them to take the lead, many of the fears of a U.S. hegemony over the maritime commons would be assuaged. Additionally, by allowing those to be at the helm, they can assure that prior concerns over initiatives like PSI are avoided. If these nations, in this example, were to police the vast amounts of oil and commercial goods flowing through

their region, and have some control and leadership in that organization, they would be much more likely to offer formal commitments of participation.

As alluded to earlier in this paper, information sharing as it currently exists must change. If we are to meet the demands of our leaders' directives, maritime domain awareness will not expand until we can link with other regional clearinghouses of information and rapidly share data. The Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) and the National Maritime Intelligence Center (NMIC) can not handle the global maritime commons – there is too much area to cover and too few assets to do it. Whether these organizations create specific sharing agreements or trade liaison officers with other centers does not matter – it has to happen. Imagine linking directly with the Information Sharing Center (ISC) in Singapore, the headquarters of OPERATION ACTIVE ENDEAVOR in the Mediterranean, INTERPOL, Dubai Port Authorities, and a myriad of other maritime concerns around the globe. Rapid transmission of data, such as an incoming piracy report to the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) or local coast guard, Automatic Identification System (AIS) information from an Australian ship, embarkation/debarkation and manifest data from the port authority in Rotterdam and Maersk Shipping Lines headquarters, could create an entire history of the cargo on a specific ship attacked in the Strait of Malacca, easily accessible by any of hundreds of participants worldwide. Ready forces could deploy from a nearby location, airborne or seaborne, and intercept the suspect vessel within hours or minutes.

Finally, the TSN / GMPI concept must be matured into an interlaced system of systems. Referring again to the successful organization policing the Strait of Malacca, picture many similar organizations operating throughout the world, networked together. Rather than responders contributing only when they feel the desire to, multiple navies, coast guards,

ports, law enforcement organizations, and information centers would be linked together, creating a true global network. While there would still be gaps in the maritime commons in the open ocean, critical choke points, ports, and shipping centers would be continually linked and prescient of relevant data. Additionally, we must leverage the ground gained through such initiatives as PSI, the Global Container Security Initiative, the NATO and Italian-led ACTIVE ENDEAVOR and merge their existing agreements and precepts into the TSN web.

Figure 3 presents a possible depiction of this.

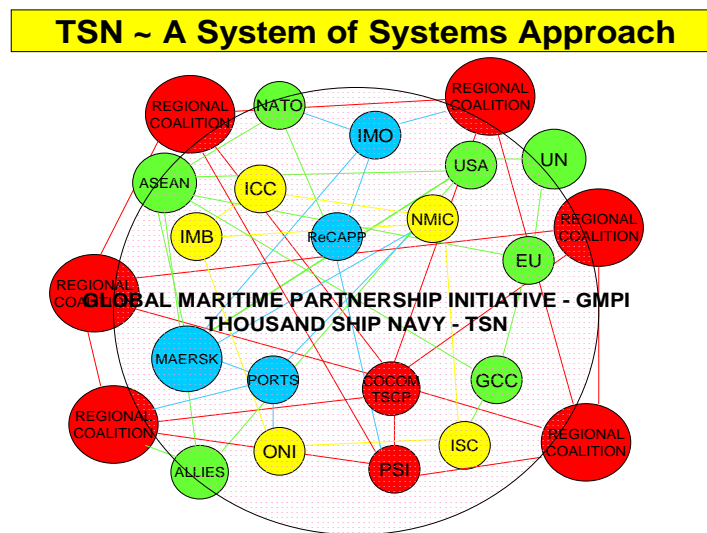


Figure 3

The key to the success of any global maritime partnership will be instituting and ensuring it is a true partnership. While the United States may be the sole global power with a blue water navy, true global maritime security can only be gained, and enforced, with the help of all maritime nations. OPERATION UNIFIED ASSISTANCE showed how many nations can work together to provide humanitarian aid to millions of devastated people, but it also showed how disparate agendas can detract from the larger goal. The virtual CMOC that was created provided a useful starting point for everyone with a task or mission related to the

overall effort, it did not appear to be a fully realized operational tool. PSI had, at its center, a goal of preventing the proliferation of WMD throughout the globe; but the ways proffered conflicted with many nations' legal interpretations of the law of the sea. Committed membership is limited; participation on par with that envisioned by the current TSN concept is almost nil. And lastly, the ongoing efforts in Southeast Asia, while offering great successes against maritime crime, are limited in scope, participation, and geography. Any future success of the TSN concept must come from dedicated participation, at all levels and across all communities and disciplines, with all involved receiving equal benefits.

Closing

The current model for a global maritime security initiative being touted by the CNO would be an effective approach if all organizations were equally capable and willing to supply forces and capabilities whenever dictated by a situation. The examples provided above illustrate first, how loosely formed coalitions can achieve their aim if all participants are aligned but not with competing agendas; secondly, how strictly structured organizations that give the impression of strong arm tactics can fail; lastly, how smaller, regionally aligned coalitions can achieve great success when formal agreements and objectives are agreed upon ahead of time. Any matured version of the TSN, or GMPI, must have formal commitments, be closely linked to regional organizations co-existing with similar systems, and institute cooperative information sharing agreements. Critical to its success will be ensuring foreign nations and organizations have pride in ownership and view it as aligned with their own national strategic interests.

“Operationalizing” this concept must follow a system of systems approach, leveraging the capabilities, agreements, and forces already in place around the globe. Aligning organizations such as ASEAN, the U.N., ReCAP, ACTIVE ENDEAVOR, and PSI, and providing the assets and capabilities of information and law enforcement clearinghouses like NMIC, ONI, INTERPOL, and the ISC all under the guidance of regional, sovereign coalitions should occur. This alignment would provide a robust network capable of providing a continuous security umbrella in the maritime domain. The maritime commons is too vast for any one nation or organization to police. It must be done by those with shared interests working in a virtual maritime partnership of a thousand ships.

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